

# NEWS RELEASE

## Kaibab National Forest



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### Williams Visitor Center features display of unique photo collection

**WILLIAMS, Ariz.** – The Williams and Forest Service Visitor Center is hosting a display through at least the end of January that features a unique historic photo collection documenting the history of the City of Williams and the surrounding area, including the Kaibab National Forest.

Since 2009, the Kaibab National Forest has collaborated with the Williams Public Library to gather historic photos, documents and oral histories for the Williams Historic Photo Project collection, which now boasts more than 2,100 separate items representing iconic places and themes such as “the Mother Road” Route 66, cattle and sheep ranching, logging and the timber industry, railroads and more.

The collection, which is entirely digital, is stored on a computer dedicated to the project at the Williams library and is made available to the public free of charge. The purpose of the project, according to Kaibab National Forest heritage program manager Margaret Hangan, is to preserve these precious treasures of the past and to make them available to the public for historic research.

The database contains scanned photos and documents from both the Kaibab National Forest and the Williams Public Library historic collections along with donated items from the personal collections of local families. Hangan and Williams Public Library director Andrea Dunn have led the 5-year-long effort to create what is now an indispensable resource for learning about the history of the local area.

“We are always looking for new collections,” Hangan said. “We are beginning to get collections that have been stored in people’s closets, garages or basements for over a hundred years and have never been viewed by the public. In one case, had the person not heard about the historic photo project, the collection would have been tossed out in the garbage!”

Hangan encourages people to allow temporary access to their family photo collections so that they can be scanned and catalogued. The originals are then returned to their owners along with copies of all the digital files. This is a win-win situation, explains Hangan, because the owners get digital versions of their images and documents, and the broader public gets access to a wealth of historical information.

To view the Williams Historic Photo Project collection display, visit the Williams and Forest Service Visitor Center, 200 W. Railroad Ave., Williams, (800) 863-0546, between now and the end of January. To get access to the full collection, contact the Williams Public Library, (928) 635-4422, to make an appointment.

For additional information on the project or to make a personal collection available, contact Margaret Hangan at (928) 635-8342 or [mhangan@fs.fed.us](mailto:mhangan@fs.fed.us).

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